



## **Florida House of Representatives**

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## **IN MIDST OF HISTORIC ECONOMIC CRISIS, HOUSE PASSES RESPONSIBLE BALANCED BUDGET, INCREASES EDUCATION FUNDING, PRESERVES CORE MISSIONS**

*~House takes Fiscally Responsible, Long-Term View~*

**TALLAHASSEE, FL** – Working to create the conditions to jump start Florida’s economic recovery and create jobs, the Florida House of Representatives today approved a prioritized \$66.5 billion budget for FY 09-10 that places the highest priority on education, health care and public safety while preserving core missions of government and meeting the Constitutional mandate to responsibly balance Florida’s budget.

“This year Florida faced the worst budget environment in the state’s history. With an unprecedented deficit, an uncertain economic outlook and the expiration date of the federal stimulus dollars on the horizon, the Florida House took a measured and thoughtful approach to crafting a budget that protects our most important priorities and places Florida in the best possible posture to put our economy back on track,” said House Majority Leader Adam Hasner (R-Delray Beach). “Unlike Washington, we are constitutionally required to balance our budget. We can’t spend more than we can afford. We made tough choices and focused on core missions like education and health care. We’ve produced a responsible, long-term budget that puts Florida in the position to rebound as the economy recovers.”

As they have done in past sessions, House Democrats unanimously opposed the budget, despite not having provided alternatives except \$6.5 billion in tax increases, and resorting frequently to partisan attacks instead of working for solutions.

Despite continued declining revenues, the budget approved today preserves core missions and sets real priorities when it came to investing in Florida’s future:

- Increased per-student funding for our K-12 schools to \$6873
- Fully funded the MEDS-AD and Medically Needy Programs, which were scheduled to expire on July 1, 2009
- Worked to stimulate economic recovery with \$30 million for first-time Homebuyers

(more)

- Protected services and provider rates for Florida's developmentally disabled
- Maintained our commitment to restoring the Everglades with continued Funding
- Expanded the Nursing Home Diversion Program, which will enable more Floridians to receive vital services in their communities
- Maintained our commitment to public safety by providing full funding for Florida's sworn officers
- Invested in the future of Florida's economy by increasing funding for state universities
- Provided \$13.5 million in the Quick Action Closing Fund to attract new companies to Florida
- Increased funding for Film and Entertainment Incentives to attract more film and entertainment jobs to Florida
- Prioritized public safety by protecting funding for vital probation and security officers who work with offenders

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